

Minutes of Special Meeting of June 30, 2009

CALL TO ORDER 6:35 P.M.

ROLL CALL

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Feierbach, Dickenson, Lieberman Wozniak, Braunstein

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: None

Staff Present: City Manager Crist, City Attorney Zafferano, Community Development Director de Melo, Project Manager Mittelstadt, Police Sergeant Daley, Chief Building Official Nolfi, City Treasurer Violet, City Clerk Cook.

Presentation of the San Mateo County Energy Strategy

Richard Napier, Executive Director of C/CAG, stated that the goal of the energy strategy is to conserve resources and protect the environment. He provided a background of the County task force that addressed these issues. He outlined goals surrounding energy and water consumption, and noted that the task force is partnering with public utilities to address environmental issues. He stated that economic health can be strengthened by supporting clean technology. He described the benefits of the energy strategy for the City of Belmont, and that the report intends to be a resource document.

Councilmember Wozniak commended the report's emphasis on energy efficiency and conservation.

Councilmember Feierbach expressed concerns about growing population, housing demands, and the increased need for energy when development occurs.

Mayor Braunstein described the recent Mayor summit he attended at Joint Venture Silicon Valley wherein the need for regional collaboration was discussed.

Mr. Napier responded that the Transportation Plan still needs to be addressed. He also stated that there are legislative bills pending that address regional collaboration. He described the Sustainable Communities Plan. He noted that there will be more regional programs and initiatives forthcoming.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Lieberman, seconded by Councilmember Dickenson, Resolution 10148 Adopting the San Mateo County Energy Strategy was unanimously approved by a show of hands.

Review of Draft Recommendations from the Green Advisory Committee (GAC)

Community Development Director de Melo provided background of the formation of the committee and the subcommittee structure. He stated that each city will be developing its own climate action plan, and that goals and ideas set forth by the committee are intended to be unique to the City of Belmont.

Susan Wright, Green Advisory Committee (GAC), outlined the various issues addressed by the GAC. She described community outreach options that could be initiated. She noted that

sustainability was discussed. Transportation issues included bikeways, pedestrian safety, traffic calming, and initiation of a walking school bus. Waste Prevention and Recycling issues included achieving zero waste, potential ban of plastic bags, and diversion of organic waste from the landfill. Water and energy strategies included weatherization and energy efficient programs. She noted that the committee also recommended the use of green building codes.

Community Development Director de Melo stated that some of the recommendations will be easy to implement, and others could be considered for the long term. There is a need to identify a partner to assist with this effort. He noted that the recommendations of the GAC are tied to the General Plan and Vision Statement. The fiscal impact will be determined as options are implemented.

Bob Ledoux, Belmont resident/GAC committee member, stated that the initiation of a solar assessment district was not included in the recommendations. He recommended adopting more incentives to encourage solar installations.

Councilmember Feierbach thanked the GAC committee for its hard work. She noted that vehicular parking in bike lanes is an issue. She does not support the use of low sodium lights.

Councilmember Lieberman stated that the GAC is a dedicated committee, and he thanked Councilmembers Wozniak and Dickenson for their leadership with the group. He commented that outreach will make people more aware of all of these issues, and will make implementation more acceptable.

Councilmember Wozniak stated there were a wide range of opinions among committee members, and all ideas were worthy of consideration.

Councilmember Dickenson stated that all committee members provided valuable input. He congratulated Community Development Director de Melo for taking the lead, which alleviated the need for a consultant.

Mayor Braunstein expressed his appreciation for the committee's work. He noted that there is a need to be collaborative in order to outreach to all, and a need for regional partnerships. He expressed concerns regarding how to address the issue of when implementing green costs more. Education is important. The City needs to explain why going green is important, but it should not be forced on anyone. Green issues should be phased in. Some options may have a high cost. He expressed his desire to implement the lower cost items first. He suggested holding a Town Hall meeting on this topic. He also expressed his concern regarding the expectations of committing to all the recommendations. He noted that other cities may have developed models that could be used for Belmont.

Councilmember Wozniak noted that other models were considered and discussed by the committee.

Councilmember Dickenson concurred with the need to incorporate ideas into everyday business. He suggested adding a sustainable component to the staff report template.

Discussion ensued.

GAC Committee Member Wright stated that the committee discussed the ability to be able to commit to all recommendations. She noted that the group was sensitive to expectations.

Councilmember Lieberman expressed his desire to consider the Berkeley financing program for solar installation in Belmont. Economies of scale are an important consideration. There may be a desire to partner with other cities to implement some of the regional issues. He noted that many of the recommendations are likely to be supported and will be easy to implement.

Councilmember Dickenson expressed the need to monitor State and federal legislation that address conservation, energy and green issues.

Community Development Director de Melo stated that the draft report will be brought before each of the City's commissions for review and comment.

Mike Swire, GAC Committee member, stated that this is a good first step. He noted that most recommendations are not aggressive, and many items have been implemented elsewhere. Some cost items will have a payback in later years. He noted that the citizens of Belmont will likely embrace the recommendations.

RECESS: 7:45 P.M.

RECONVENE: 7:50 P.M.

Discussion and Direction for solar (photovoltaic) at Belmont Library

Project Manager Mittelstadt stated that staff was seeking direction regarding solar installation at the Library. He noted that funding options are available.

Tim Schaefer, Magis Advisors, stated that this would be an opportunity to make a choice to engage in a business venture that could provide some benefit to the City of Belmont. He noted there is also a possibility of risk.

Ryan Ciriboga, Magis Advisors, described the solar installation project. He outlined the pros and cons of a direct purchase, as well as the incentives for each funding option, and provided information on financing comparisons. He described similar projects in other cities throughout the State. He clarified that the power purchasing agreement (PPA) structure is new, but companies offering these agreements have been existence under other entities.

Discussion ensued.

Bob Ledoux, Belmont resident, recommended utilizing the power purchasing agreement option.

In response to Council questions, Project Manager Mittelstadt clarified that there would be a \$50,000 annual cost for the library installation, and the amount of savings would depend on the structure of the PPA. Initial costs could be higher, with savings realized in future years.

Councilmember Feierbach stated she would like feedback from the Friends of the Belmont Library.

John Violet, Friends of the Belmont Library, stated that the library staff has expressed concerns regarding maintenance, but if the PPA structure is implemented, this would be a nonissue.

Councilmember Wozniak recommended vendor presentations.

Morton Frank stated he has done work in Belmont for many years, and has built solar houses. There is a need for a more broad perspective in order to weigh options. He recommended checking with the library's architect prior to installation, since that building was designed to utilize natural light.

Councilmember Dickenson expressed his appreciation for the information provided by the consultant. He noted this is an issue of scale versus benefit. Other roof space may be available, and pending legislation could provide other options. He recommended that this matter be referred to the Infrastructure Committee.

Councilmember Wozniak expressed concern that this project may not be feasible if installation is done only at the library. She concurred that a larger project may be a better choice.

Project Manager Mittelstadt stated that the Corporation Yard may be the only other site available, but there has been consideration given to moving it. Costs will be higher if the solar installation has to be moved.

Discussion ensued. Council concurred to refer this matter to the Infrastructure Committee and to further explore the power purchase agreement option.

Paul Dermenjian, Yes Solar Solutions, noted that the City of Antioch is applying for a grant for solar installation.

Report on High Speed Rail Consortium (verbal) and motion to appoint Alternate to the Consortium

Councilmember Wozniak stated that it is important that the City of Belmont be represented on the High Speed Rail Consortium. She will be unable to attend some upcoming meetings and requested the Council appoint an alternate.

Community Development Director de Melo noted that staff is working with an outreach coordinator, and that the environmental review is ongoing.

Council concurred to appoint Councilmember Feierbach as the alternate for the High Speed Rail Consortium.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 9:45 P.M.

TERRI COOK

Meeting Tape Recorded and Videotaped
Audio Recording 730

City Clerk